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2019-05-01

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Xavier University (Cincinnati, Ohio), "Xavier University Newswire" (2019). *All Xavier Student Newspapers*. 3087.

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Arrupe Leaders cross the finish line

Senior Becky Hagedorn hopes to outrun the stigma around mental health

BY DEVON BAIRD
Staff Writer

Xavier and the Cincinnati community came together on Saturday in front of Cintas Center to tip their weekend off with a running start by fighting stigma around mental health.

Senior Becky Hagedorn, an Arrupe Leader, has spent this last year working with the university and various mental health organizations to put together Xavier's first ever End the Stigma 5K. The goal of the 5K was to not only get students up and running, but also to start conversations about mental health on campus and provide more resources for students.

"(I wanted to) get the word out about how easy it can be to talk about your mental health when you have that open ear and open mind," Hagedorn said. "Yes, there is a stigma around mental illness, but there doesn't have to be."

According to the American

Psychological Association, one out of every three first-year college students suffers from some sort of mental illness, yet only 15 to 20 percent will actually seek out help. The World Health Organization reports that one out of four people in the world will be impacted by a mental or neurological disorder at some point in their lives.

Stigmas, such as fearing judgement from their community, can keep students from using services.

Xavier offers free mental health services for students at McGrath Health and Wellness Center, Sycamore House and online.

Because some students may be unaware of all the services available or may be too intimidated to use them, Hagedorn encourages the student body to step up for their friends and peers to provide a support network. This support network starts with listening.

Senior Jacqueline Fox,



Photo courtesy of Brendan Ross

More than 100 people showed up outside of Cintas Center on Saturday to race and discuss mental health awareness. The event was senior Becky Hagedorn's Arrupe Leader project.

among others, shared her story about seeking help for her mental well-being and how she's fought her own battle while helping others work to end the stigma around mental health.

Xavier University Psychological Services and 1N5, a local non-profit focused on raising mental health awareness, also had a table with information for those who were interested.

Once the race began some ran, others walked, and participants cheered each other on clad in "End the Stigma" t-shirts. Hagedorn shared that everyone seemed to have fun by the end of the race, no matter what their time was.

"It was awesome to see all the Xavier students, employees and alumni come out today," Hagedorn said, referring to the more than 100 people who showed up. She hopes they were able to take

a message of courage when it comes to discussing mental health with others. She added that she'd love to see this event continue in the future.

The race, which was Hagedorn's Arrupe Leader project, was the first of its kind. Rising seniors who have been active in the Xavier community over the years are nominated by the graduating class of Arrupe Leaders, then given the opportunity to carry out a legacy project that represents their passions as undergraduates.

"(It's) a way for students to look back on their time at Xavier," Hagedorn added, reflecting on her roles in the community over the years.. and leave their own mark on the Xavier community.

Other projects have included Sex Week, Queer Faith XU and more.

With finals approaching and students racing to finish

the year, Hagedorn believes now is the time to remind the Xavier community to take care of themselves — both physically and mentally.

Although the data says otherwise, Hagedorn acknowledges that it's easy for students to feel alone when coping with mental illness.

"It's important to know that you are not alone. There are many people here on campus, who you probably know, that are having problems with their mental health," Hagedorn said, emphasizing the importance of students feeling comfortable sharing their experiences.

While she believes it was a success, Hagedorn hopes the race can have a larger impact than one Saturday morning.

"I hope they take these things (we discussed) and spread them to their friends and family and carry on the conversation."



Photo courtesy of Brendan Ross

Becky Hagedorn (above) organized a 5K called "End the Stigma," with the goal of helping to raise awareness of stigmas around mental health.

In this issue...

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Continuing from last week, BDA reflects on how their first semester in office has gone.



World News, Page 3

This year has been weird. Check out the year in review to see exactly how weird.



Op-Eds, Page 4

Next stop, graduation. But the question stays the same: When will you get off the bus?



Features, Page 8

We have a brand new staff for the upcoming year. Take the chance to learn who we are.



Reviewing the semester with BDA

A continuation of last week's front page article voicing the thoughts of BDA

BY KEVIN THOMAS
Editor-in-Chief

BDA continues to share their achievements, issues and future plans as their time as Student Government Executives is half complete.

Due to the length of the interview conducted with BDA, the entire transcription will appear on the Newswire website.

Kevin: Moving onto the major projects that are going on, like the HUB, Gallagher Basement, the new dorm, can y'all give an update on that?

Blair McKee, President: Update on the HUB, the last thing I heard, they might open certain portions by November. It will be fully open in January, second semester. That's what I've heard so far. But they just had a lot of issues because of the weather, so a lot of delays with rain and different things like that... The HUB should be coming around then.

Alfredo Mercedes, Vice President: But they average something like a hundred workers a day.

with, we'll be able to proceed with design and building, but that shouldn't be up until fall 2021... They also have a lot of plans in place of leveraging near-campus housing, meaning U-station, which is expanding. They're using a lot of that to help offset having to move first-year students off campus.

K: Now moving into your projects. Y'all got the (free) laundry done.

All: Yes! Yeah, so...

B: ...Clothes bank, moving, slowly but surely.

Desmond Varner, Vice President: The biggest thing about the clothes bank is just storage and we've been trying to work in collaboration with the store and Angie Kneflin in order to not only store the items there but also make items available and leverage the fact that students that may have food insecurity might also have clothing issues as well, so kind of kill two birds with one stone. (The work is) maximizing and optimizing what the store would look like, so a lot of that has to deal with planning with Angie Kneflin



Photo courtesy of Alfredo Mercedes

President Blair McKee (left), Vice President Alfredo Mercedes (second from right) and Vice President Desmond Varner (right) pose with Father Michael Graham, president, as their executive term comes to its halfway point.

background work it would be. The challenge is recognizing that not everyone will see that, and that's okay. So when I hear things like "SGA doesn't do anything," I understand that there are certain things that you simply won't feel the impact of. And so not being able to make every student aware of everything every day can kind of be a little challenging. But it's not discouraging. SGA, we spend money — \$3,000 to be exact — on late night breakfast for finals week. But nobody knows that because ConneX puts out marketing materials without SGA's logo on it. So it makes it seem like it's just the Caf offering free food, but in reality, SGA pays for it. But also, we don't necessarily say "SGA's putting on a breakfast" because we're not. So it's a really hard thing to balance. Not bashing ConneX, we love ConneX. But there's certain things that students don't feel because they don't know it's SGA that does it. That's been a big challenge for me.

K: How do you feel about the Senate performance?

B: I think Senate as a whole, they've done a good job... So it's a very fresh Senate, and I think that's good. They've done a great job of adjusting to what Senate is, how to communicate with administrators... And I'll just say, super quick, SRI (Student Rights and Identity), the committee...

D: Oh they're kicking butt.

B: They have a lot of great ideas, and they're really targeting issues that we don't really think about often, like students with incarcerated parents, and different things of that nature. So they're really, like, bringing up things I never even thought about. So I'm really excited to see what they come up with.

B: And the COOL (Campus On and Off Living) committee, they're working on getting printers over in the Village. That's something they've been working on, trying to get more printers to be

more central to where people live.

K: What is the biggest issue facing the university right now?

B: One specific thing that I think is an issue right now, so like with the transition of Taj Smith leaving, I think BART kind of dwindled down... BART was really kind of working on stuff, they weren't perfect, but they were working on creating spaces where students can engage on what's happening, what had occurred and why. So I think something that we've been kind of brainstorming has been what different programming and training can we do that can kind of shift how we interact with each other as students. Because it doesn't have to always be this formal thing.

D: Another thing that I wanna give my kudos to the student body is their sense of growing awareness, especially with issues that happen with Xavier and our relations, especially dealing with Carabello Coffee, that dilemma we're going through right now. I'm really just beyond excited that students are not only aware, but demanding action in terms of business practices and where Xavier is aligned with outside entities that may have a past with discriminatory practices towards certain minorities. I think that demanding immediate answers now and not being timid or shy, or afraid or mild, in terms of demanding real answers, real actions and wanting the university to be accountable. That's, like, really empower-

ing to me, and it really speaks to what we do in order for us to step up and show the whole student body what we fight for too.

K: Then, how do you also plan on playing a role in addressing those issues?

B: We make them say what they're doing and why. When we aren't into things, we really engage in conversation with them and they really understand... So it's like, they know how we feel about it... Like, I feel like sometimes with students, if you're in front of Father Graham, you don't wanna be like, "Xavier sucks!" You feel like you have to say everything you love, and that's not how we are. And that's not to say we only say negative things, because we do love Xavier, but we have to critique things we love.

K: What are you hoping to get accomplished next semester? What's next semester going to look like? What are your priorities for that going to be?

B: The slavery symposium, we're really looking forward to that.

A: That's something bigger than Xavier, and hopefully something we can have a hand or a touch or give some aspect of student discussion there. You know, working with a possible student entrepreneur who started a company in Madagascar. So with that, SGA can possibly go across the world, something I don't think ever's been done by Xavier SGA. So getting SGA's name out there and empowering the students.



Photo courtesy of Instagram

Student Government Association Executives Alfredo Mercedes (left), Blair McKee (middle) and Desmond Varner (right) discuss time in office.

B: Yeah, so they're moving very fast... (The basement), they're still doing a lot of finalizing as far as what the actual layout of the room is going to look like, but Chris (Marshall) knows what games he wants down there, what systems, so the logistics are there... I think that'll be done over the summer, but that's as of now.

K: Yeah, I mean, everything's subject to change.

B: Everything's as of now. Housing, I sit on the committee with everyone important that's involved in housing, but they've had an outside group come in and present, an architect... Our initial meetings have been really established, like how much it'll cost, how much we're building, all of this information will go to the Board of Trustees and their meeting is next Friday, May 3. If they approve the budget that we came up

and some storage stuff and dealing with the renovations they need to make sure that we're growing together.

B: Also, back into what we're doing with sustainability...

D: The clothes fall under sustainability, so that's another way to test and see if students would be more interested in seeing second-hand clothes, saving textile waste and all the process and dyes and water and stuff that go into producing the new clothes that we all buy... Definitely the sustainability club has been an awesome ally in order for us to gauge (the) interest of the students... which will help push the envelope a little further because you know, it's a bureaucracy...

K: What's been the biggest challenges y'all have faced so far?

B: The demand, I don't think I realized how much

April 29 Student Government Association Meeting Recap

- SGA passed a resolution detailing Xavier at 5,000, a statement on how Xavier and SGA plan on maintaining student life as campus approaches 5,000 undergraduates.
- University Committees were released and are pending approval of university administration

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

A combination of “Police Notes” and “Week in Review” from the last year

KEY:
WIR : WEEK IN REVIEW
PN : POLICE NOTE

WIR: July 31 — The *Wall Street Journal* reported that parents are beginning to pay between \$10 and \$20 per hour for Fortnite lessons for their children. Parents cite pressure from peers at school as the primary reason for purchasing sessions to help their kids level up.

PN: Aug. 16, 9:45 a.m. — A non-student was caught laying on tables and acting unusual in Gallagher Student Center. The person was warned about trespassing and asked to leave campus.

PN: Aug. 21, 11:32 p.m. — Xavier Police stopped two students from moving construction barricades on Cleaney Avenue. The students were referred to code of conduct for underage drinking.

WIR: Aug. 21 — President Donald Trump’s fingers have earned him criticism once again — only this time, it’s not for Tweeting but for coloring. Photos of his recent

visit with children in Columbus appear to indicate that he incorrectly colored one of the stripes on the American flag blue. Some of the more humorous critics couldn’t help but note the resemblance to the Russian flag, whose three stripes are white, blue and red.

WIR: Sept. 3 — A cheeky burglar was determined to make use of all materials to craft a battering ram to rob a clothing store in West Mercia, England, including a giraffe sculpture named Dotty. The sculpture was part of a walking trail fundraiser for a hospice organization.

PN: Oct. 13, 5:28 p.m. — Xavier Police investigated reports of an intoxicated student found sleeping in a restroom stall in Hinkle Hall. The student was cited for disorderly conduct and sent back to their dorm.

WIR: Oct. 18 — A California high schooler recently shared a special batch of homemade cookies with her classmates. The secret ingredient? A grandparent’s cremated ashes. One classmate

NOTE OF THE YEAR

Honestly dude,
you’re still an
absolute legend

Jan. 19, 5:49 a.m. — Xavier Police investigated a report of an intoxicated student partially clothed inside the Cintas Center. The intoxicated student advised Xavier Police that they had been celebrating their 21st birthday. The student was transported to their apartment at University Station and released to a roommate.

remarked that he did not believe the student until she pulled out the urn and said there was a special ingredient in the treats. No one who ate the cookies has reported ill effects.

PN: Nov. 13, 11:09 a.m. — An abandoned vehicle was towed from the Innovation

Center Lot at Dana Avenue and Woodburn Avenue.

WIR: Nov. 27 — Researchers in Australia and the United Kingdom have been swallowing Legos in an attempt to reassure concerned parents. The researchers developed their own metrics for the study using the Stool Hardness and Transit (SHAT) score as well as the Found and Retrieved Time (FART) score.

PN: Nov. 29, 12:12 p.m. — An employee from Cintas Parking Services reported the theft of a golf cart from the back of Cintas Center.

PN: Nov. 29, 8:32 p.m. — Norwood Police recovered the missing golf cart on the 1900 block of Lexington Ave.

PN: Nov. 30, 7:19 a.m. — An employee reported a minor auto accident in the Physical Plant Lot. Investigation revealed that a dump truck was backed into a golf cart.

WIR: Jan. 11 — Costco has announced that it now offers its customers a 27-pound

bucket of macaroni and cheese. The bucket costs \$89.99, has 180 servings and has a shelf life of 20 years.

WIR: Feb. 5 — A proposed law in Hawaii would raise the minimum age to buy cigarettes to 100 by the year 2024, effectively banning them across the state. “You are taking people who are enslaved from a horrific addiction and freeing people from horrific enslavement,” Richard Creagan, the bill’s creator, said.

PN: Feb. 10, 2:06 p.m. — Xavier Police investigated a report of a vehicle driving on the residential mall and through the grass on the Xavier Yard. The driver, who works for DoorDash food delivery service, was cited for reckless operation and driving with a suspended license.

PN: Feb. 15, 12:22 a.m. — A student consumed a hamburger that was possibly laced with illegal drugs. The student who consumed the tainted hamburger was checked on by the Cincinnati Fire Department and transported to Good Samaritan Hospital for further treatment.

WIR: Feb 22 — Middletown, Ohio, police led an escaped pig back home with Oreo cookies. It’s speculated that Charlotte the pot-bellied pig had gone to the market in search of these sweet treats and happily cried “wee, wee, wee” all the way home.

PN: Feb. 23, 4:53 a.m. — Xavier Police, Residence Life and Cincinnati Fire responded to Brockman Hall for an underage intoxicated student sleeping in the elevator. The student was checked by medics and given the OK.

WIR: March 3 — A women’s bike race in Belgium was delayed because its leader caught up to the men’s field. The men were given a 10-minute head start. The leading cyclist ended up finishing 74th after the delay.

PN: April 3, 4:31 p.m. — A student reported they were a victim of a catfishing incident on Snapchat.

PN: April 13, 4:41 p.m. — Xavier Police investigated an auto accident involving a tractor-trailer on Dana Avenue near St. Francis Xavier Way. The driver, who overdosed on heroin was revived with narkan and arrested by Cincinnati Police for operating a vehicle while under the influence (OVI).

Pictures in review

The two best pictures from this school year’s “Week in Review”



Screen grab courtesy of of Polizei Baden-Wuerttemberg



Screen grab courtesy of abc.com

A German man called police to report that he was being pursued by a baby squirrel. Karlsruhe police responded to the scene and initiated their a pursuit of the animal, which fell asleep after being caught. The police declared the critter its new mascot and named it Karl-Friedrich (Aug. 12).

Police in Salinas, Calif., are trying to track down a man who spent three hours licking a doorbell in the middle of the night. The suspect was caught on surveillance. “I thought I’d seen it all, but this takes the cake,” neighbor Francisco Javier Estrada said (Jan. 8).

XAVIER XUPD ANNOUNCEMENT



Xavier Police is in the process of cleaning out its lost and found property locker. If you would like to check for any lost or missing items, please stop by Flynn Hall on business days between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. by Friday, May 10.

If you see something, say something.

Don't forget to do what you love

To say that my X-Perience has gone differently than I imagined would be a vast understatement.

When freshman Ellen first moved into Kuhlman 009, she had plans to graduate with majors in chemistry and Spanish before beginning a career in forensic science; only to work as a copy editor for the *Newswire*, maybe writing an article every once in a while; and not become addicted to coffee like her mother did in college, among other ideas.



Ellen Siefke is a graduating senior. During her time with the *Newswire* she has served as the Editor-in-Chief, the Managing Editor, the Head Copy Editor, a copy editor and a staff writer.

Senior Ellen will be leaving Commons 320 D with a double major in English and Spanish and plans to go to law school; having served as a copy editor — plus Head Copy Editor, Managing Editor and Editor-in-Chief — for the *Newswire*; and completely unable to function without her coffee in the morning.

As I said, quite a bit different than what I pictured. How did I get there? Simply put, I did what I loved. Or more accurately, I *let myself* do what I loved.

For example, when it came to my major, it's not as though I didn't like chemistry. I liked it a lot, in fact. However, notice that I said *liked*, not *loved*. And when I realized that I didn't even *like* working in a lab, it was clear that a path in the sciences was not for me.

So, I did what I loved. I *love* reading and writing, and I *love* textual analysis. Hence, I'm now an English and Spanish double major with plans to go to law school and pursue a career doing what I love: conducting research, analyzing texts, putting forth a claim

and defending it.

That's not to say my experience since then has been smooth. My senior year especially has been the most difficult I have ever experienced. Why was it so difficult? Because I stopped giving myself permission to do what I loved. My perfectionist tendencies, my strong work ethic and my competitive nature — which have helped me achieve a lot — started leading me down a dark path, one that culminated in my taking a leave of absence in the fall to go home and learn to take care of myself.

Having to go home during the semester and put everything on hold was the last thing I had imagined would happen. But it happened, and it was necessary. I spent that time learning how to take care of myself, including giving myself permission to do what I loved.

See, along with the perfectionism comes the desire to please everyone and to do the right thing. I've spent a lot of time trying to mold myself into what I *think* people

want me to be instead of letting myself just *be*. And it literally took being yanked from school, the *Newswire*, my friends and many other things that I loved before that finally started to sink in. This life of insecurity in which I constantly questioned what other people thought of me and whether I was doing the right thing was not, is not and never will be sustainable.

So while this year has been extremely difficult, it's also been extremely important. I've started to let myself be *Ellen*, and I've started to give myself permission to do what I love. Sure, I'm still taking the same English and Spanish classes that I love and still doing the work with the *Newswire* that I love, but it's those other smaller things that I've been giving myself permission to embrace.

Singing in the choir at Mass then going home to rock out to Slipknot? No, Ellen, there's nothing wrong with you. You love music, and you love that you have a wide range of musical outlets. Being a lover of British Romantic literature,

regularly using “whilst” and maintaining a high level of grammatical formality in your speech? No, Ellen, you're not a weirdo. You love Romantic literature, you wrote a damn good thesis all about the sublime and you're a grammar nerd whose manner of speaking makes you Ellen.

The reality is that I've never claimed to play by the rules. A family friend often tells the story of when, as a second-grader, I spent Halloween playing soccer with the boys at recess while donning a very pretty fairy dress that my mother specially made for me. And it's that confidence — unapologetically doing what I love, no matter what others may think — that I'm slowly starting to regain.

So I leave you, my beloved readers and my beloved staff, with this simple advice. Whilst you pass through your time at Xavier, never forget to let yourself do what you love. Embrace all the idiosyncrasies that make you who you are. Let yourself be you, for you are worthy of love, and you deserve to do what you love.

The upcoming bus stops: Where will you get off?

For the entirety of my life, I knew I would be attending Xavier. Both of my parents had been professors here since 1999 until my tenured mother was illegally fired nearly a decade later — but that's a story for another time. For my brothers and me, it was deeply ingrained that graduating without any debt was the best thing we could do for our futures, and that meant four years of our lives would be spent at Xavier. While my high school friends went on college visits and crossed their fingers for a big envelope from their top choice, I was less than excited to attend a school I didn't really choose or even particularly like.

It's no secret to the people who know me that my college experience has been not-as-advertised. I commuted for three years, befriended mainly seniors during my first year and pretty much wandered around for the rest, feeling unsure and out of place, despite the good people

and great opportunities in my life. While everyone was clique-ing up our freshman year, my friends' graduations landed me back at square one. I was a sophomore with freshman-level desperation and most people just didn't seem interested in adding another name to their contact list.

My college experience was lackluster at best. I envied the stories of dorm life that reminded me of my favorite movies, wondered how I was supposed to find a “squad” and felt completely apathetic about the “ra-ra” school spirit of the basketball fans around me. I floated through my four years acquiring and losing close friends and nostalgic experiences to the void of graduation and, just, life. This whole thing was supposed to be different, and it just wasn't.

I've had great friends and wonderful memories, but I feel no desire to stay any longer than required for a piece of paper valued at a whopping \$120,000. Early on, it was apparent that this whole college thing was wonderfully temporary. While others never want to leave, I've been at the front of the bus ready for the next stop.

Despite being someone so strong-willed and sure of themselves (i.e. stubborn and cocky), I was often caught up in thoughts of what I *should* be doing, who I *should* be. I craved a reference point, but since I didn't have the default “college experience” I felt entitled to, I grew increasingly bitter after my freshman year.

I was consumed by everything I didn't have and everything that wasn't ideal. The lens through which I saw the world was tinted by what I envisioned for my default life. Walking around campus each day, I was reminded that my experience was different from everyone else's, the life I didn't have dangled in front of me.

Moving out my senior year became a marker of my happiness. I thought that once I began living the default experience I deserved, then everything would fall into place. But instead I spent months repairing my relationship with my parents that I single-handedly damaged. I worked with my therapist toward becoming more grateful and compassionate. And I'm still learning how to see the people around me as just as human as me.

Things will not always be ideal. And they might seem overwhelmingly unideal for longer than you expect. But that does not mean you have less, and it certainly doesn't make you entitled to more.

One of the scariest but also most reassuring parts of life lies in the temporary. You can ride on the bus for as long as you want, but you'll ultimately come to the end of the line. There will be dozens of stops along the way, and you can always choose to get off, but everything eventually becomes a waystation. And when you do get off the bus, you have to choose what you will carry, how much weight your

shoulders can bear and when it's time to stop packing. You can't take it all with you, and you shouldn't. There simply isn't enough space.

It's OK to be waiting for the next stop or to just enjoy the ride. It's OK to listen to the clock tick or leave your watch at home. Anywhere you go is temporary. And while you may be waiting on life, life will never wait for you. So, what will you pack?



Hannah Paige Michels is a graduating senior. During her time with the *Newswire* she has served as the Campus News Editor, the Photography Editor, a copy editor and a staff writer.

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Mission Statement
The Xavier *Newswire* is committed to reporting the news as well as explain its significance to readers. In addition, through publishing opposing viewpoints and opinions, the *Newswire* hope to foster a dialogue on campus, among students, faculty and staff.

Advertising
All inquiries should be directed to the Business & Advertising Manager, Jessica Blocker, at 513-745-3561.

For Your Information
The Xavier *Newswire* is published weekly throughout the school year, except during vacations and final exams, by the students of Xavier University, 3800 Victory Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45207. One copy is free per person per week.

*The *Newswire* has made the decision to stray from the AP Style Guide when printing the words White and Black in reference to groups of people. We have decided to capitalize both.

Down to the Piraeus

Could I possibly graduate without a last return to where it began?

As thoughts turn towards the turmoil of life in the *real world*, memories of a cramped room in Kuhlman Hall and the first chill of an idyllic autumn can't help but surface. Plato's *Republic*, the first text many of us encountered on arrival to campus, serves as the progenitor for much of what we do here — and in this moment reads as comforting clarity in the tempest of an uncertain future.

The dialogue, and much of Western philosophy for that matter, emanates from its now canonized first line: "I went down to the Piraeus yesterday." Offered by the text's protagonist (or antagonist, as he'd surely prefer), Socrates, it recollects his descent down from the elevated hill-top marketplace of the Agora to the Aegean port called the Piraeus — a community that served as a home to the outsiders of ancient Athens: vagabonds, adventurers and foreign merchants, mostly. There, the gadfly engages his interlocutors in a discussion of justice and the good life

that still evokes both admiration and aversion today.

Thumbing through my copy, Book VII of the dialogue hosts Plato's discussion of the cave, perhaps the most enduring allegory in the Western canon. There, we find a community of prisoners condemned from birth to a life chasing illusory shadows, chained up so as to forever labor in a state of near-understanding as flickering images dance around them on the cave walls.

That is, until one day when a prisoner gets loose, and stumbles his way up and out into the dazzling sunlight beyond the cave. Though initially overwhelmed, our protagonist soon finds his footing in the shimmering world outside, and is afforded the opportunity to study the forms that he has long known only in faint silhouettes.

Now, faced with the possibility of an illuminated life, we might expect the freed prisoner to stay forever out in the sun. But then, something rather odd happens. The prisoner, for one reason or another, is compelled to rejoin his companions within the cave.

In doing so, he descends back again to the place of flickering shadows.

Here, the metaphor becomes clear enough. For just as the prisoner descends down to the cave, so too does Socrates descend down to the Piraeus at the text's outset. Eschewing the world of dazzling lights, both embrace the decision to descend and to engage the community there not from on high but on equal ground.

In a similarly-titled essay for the *Harvard Advocate* about a decade ago, then-undergraduate and now-author Mark Chiusano offered a rather gloomy interpretation of the descent to the cave, likening it to Odysseus' lonely travels down into the underworld in Homer's *Odyssey*. But I prefer to think about the journey a little differently. Imagine, if you'll indulge me, the joyous return of the freed prisoner to his friends. I like to envision the delight of a homecoming as he selects to live once again among those with whom he has always belonged — to share with breathless enthusiasm the tales of his adventures above.

Now, this movement is often read — and indeed Plato intended it — in the spirit of paternalism and an elitist arrogance. Truly, the allegory of the cave serves to support Plato's fraught assertion that philosophers, those who had left the cave, ought to rule with dominion over those trapped below. But I like to imagine an alternate possibility because, well, I can.

At the end of my college years, the descent to the Piraeus now reads with striking clarity as a reintegration into community, an opportunity to once again be amongst others in the *real world* and to mingle the stumbling experiences outside of the cave with the realities of life within.


During the last four years, we have been granted a dazzling stint in the sun — the chance to ascend to the heights of the Agora. Now, the moment has come. We are compelled to return to the Piraeus, not in the spirit of an ugly paternalism but with a sense of responsibility that never forgets the necessities of curiosity and humility in all things.

Such an approach brings to

mind a somewhat-clichéd line from *The West Wing*, in which President and Nobel Laureate Josiah Bartlet reminds us, "Having talent and education doesn't place you above the rest of the world. It makes you responsible for it."

It is in this sense of service that we are called back from the world of undergraduate pursuits. We are compelled to use what we have gathered these last few years — of love, of justice, of compassion — in joyous return to those around us.

Mom, Dad, Daniel — thank



Ryan Kambich is a graduating senior. During his time with the Newswire he has served as the Opinions & Editorials Editor, the Distribution Manager, a copy editor and a staff writer.

Define your own success — despite downfalls

So, uh. Graduation is a thing that's happening soon. I read the senior op-eds last year, and the year before that. I tried not to think too deeply about them at first read.

Never would I dare to connect the words of my graduated peers with my rising self. Never would I take it a step further and consider my own position in the ever-multiplying mass that is the Xavier alumni. Now that I'm literally a week or so away from getting the decorative and honorable boot from undergraduate education, I have no choice but to reflect.

Even just by judging my little bio underneath the picture of my face, things might look pretty swell. Three majors, amirite? And I actually am graduating in four years with all of them. Why shouldn't I be flexing that?

The number of degrees I have is not how I measure success. I doubt it's how anyone measures success. In fact,

I didn't even have what I have now till spring semester of last year — which is really late to be considering adding another major. It was never a "goal" of mine. I never explicitly wanted to triple major going into college. I just wanted to be successful. And if you ignore the triple major thing, what I see from my undergraduate career is a mixed bag.

On the positive end, I grew a lot. I cannot stress this enough. I walked into Manresa with a major in biology. This was my parents' decision, not my own. My father's a doctor and he strongly recommended I study to become one as well.

I thought I was being independent and confident by seeking a compromise: being a doctor... but for animals. I'd rather stick a needle into a mound of soft fur than a grumpy-looking person, I thought. I also happened to love animals. Clearly, that made me suited to be a veterinarian. I'd already taken chemistry for college credit senior year of high school. I did pretty well, too. Clearly, this was what I was supposed to do with my life.

Little did I know, I had been lying to myself all along. It started to show on the last day of Manresa. Chemistry was not the only college class I had taken during high school. I had taken a wealth of English classes. From composition and rhetoric to British literature, I already had quite the set under my belt. It

would be a downright shame if I didn't go ahead and add the English major — which was exactly what I did on the final day of Manresa.

Still, I told myself that this second major would be a "side gig." Something that would make me more well-rounded for things concerning my actual career path: veterinary medicine. English wasn't my priority. It wasn't something I should've been spending significant time on.

This came back to bite me sooner than I realized. I didn't actually want to go into medicine. Biology was my stressor, and English was my de-stressor. But I wouldn't allow myself to enjoy what enticed me, because I had already sworn that it wasn't my priority.

The very thing I liked had to be put on the back burner to the thing I didn't like as much.

But I ignored this because the pressures to remain on the track I had signed up for were innumerable. My parents. My professors. My peers. My friends. In medicine, the path to success is rigid. You get accepted to medical school, you go to medical school, you do residency and then you're a physician. I didn't know how any other education path worked.

With my English major, my mother supplied I could be an English teacher, but I had no interest in that field. Any option beyond this was foreign and unknown to me. I didn't know what was out there, let alone what out there could I)

capture my passion enough to follow through with it, and 2) allow it to lead me to some form of concrete success.

On top of this, I was isolating myself from even my peers. The few friends I had dwindled and dissolved into something negligible by an increasingly unhealthy psyche. I couldn't talk to anyone about my confusion.

I was stuck for what felt like a long time. Spring semester of my freshman year was when this spiral turned most tangible. Because I considered English less of a priority, I forced myself to get through biology homework and studying first. However, I could never even bring myself to finish this biology stuff, because I didn't want to do it and never did. As a result, I could never get to English.

I still remember the words written onto a big essay I had submitted for my poetry class that spring semester. There was no letter grade written on it. Only, "This paper is pretty much a disaster. Please see me after class."

S o m e m o n t h s later, I finally mustered the courage to take charge of my own life, dump my biology major, and pick up Digital Innovation, Film & Television instead.

Things got better after that. I learned things I want-

ed to learn. I fell in love with filmmaking and finally had the freedom to embrace English again. Later down the line I stirred my long-dormant fascination for computer science and picked that up. On top of this all, I was fortunate to study abroad in Japan for the summer of 2017.

Over and over I am reminded by how my freshman failings bogged down the rest of my undergraduate career. It tanked my GPA. Almost exclusively because of it, I don't qualify for some high-GPA honors.

But honestly, thinking back on it, I would never trade the growth I experienced in that year for a fancy certificate that could be another bullet on my resume. To me, personal growth is a greater honor than uneventful academic success could ever be.

This goes hand in hand with happiness. I may still be figuring out what I want to do after graduation, I may not have had the chance to be successful in every facet of my Xavier career, but at least I am happy. At least I know for sure that my freshman self would be speechless with awe at my accomplishments and experiences. It would be ridiculous of me to ask for more. So, I am content.



Soondos Mulla Osman is a graduating senior. During her time with the Newswire she has served as the Features Editor and a copy editor. She has three majors.

Xavier baseball improves to 9-2 in Big East play

BY JOE CLARK
Staff Writer

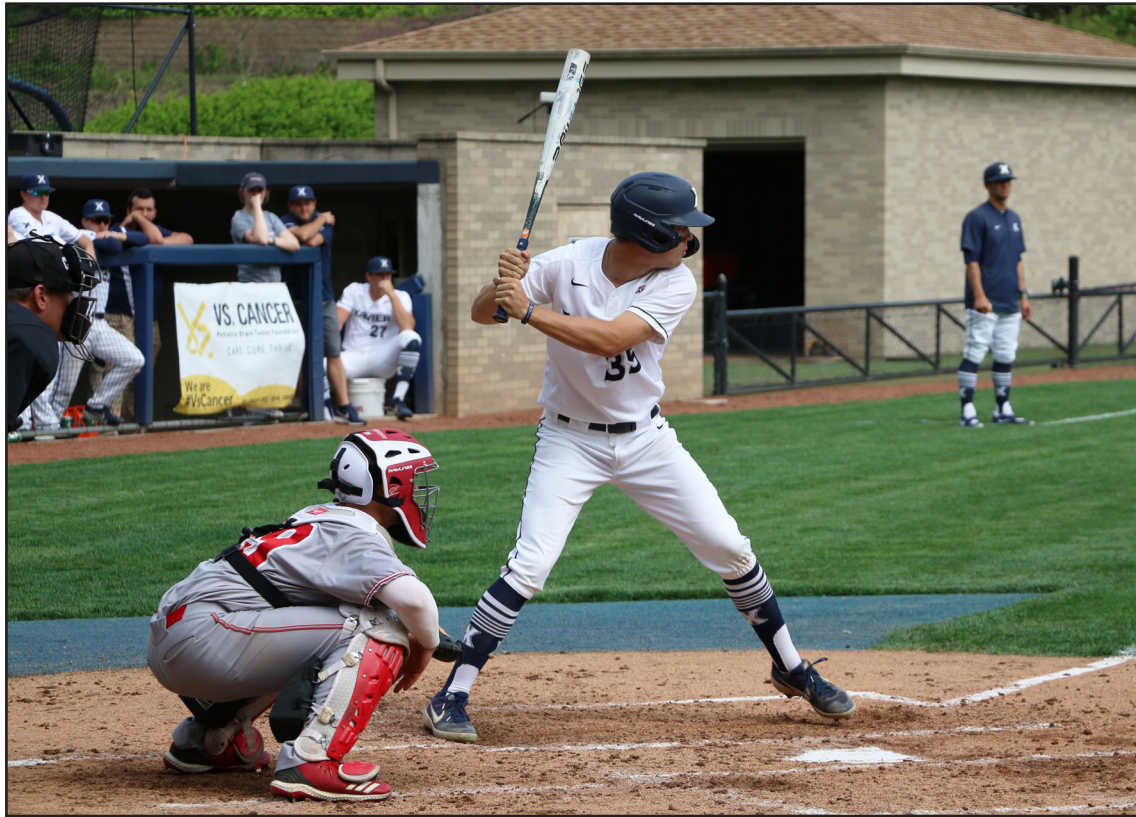
Xavier baseball traveled to Omaha, Neb., last weekend to take on Creighton in Big East Conference action before heading home for a Tuesday night game against Miami (OH).

Xavier took two of three games against the Blue Jays to improve to 9-2 in Big East play. Against the RedHawks on Tuesday, the Musketeers fell 7-4.

In game one of the series on Friday night, Xavier jumped out to a quick 3-1 lead through three innings. In the top of the second, junior catcher Natale Monastras singled home freshman infielder Jack Housinger to give the Musketeers a 1-0 lead. Creighton responded in the bottom half of the inning to score their only run, which came off a solo homer by Jordan Hovey.

That was the only blip in an otherwise impressive day for senior right-hander Damien Richard, who went 5.2 innings giving up one run while striking out four.

In the top of the third, Xavier retook the lead on an RBI single by senior first baseman Matt Warkentin to go up 2-1. The Musketeers



NewsWire photo by Desmond Fischer

The Musketeers improved to 9-2 in Big East play, and they currently sit atop the conference standings. Last weekend, Xavier took two of three from Creighton. Xavier has six Big East games remaining this year.

picked up another run in the third on senior infielder Chris Givin's double to give themselves a two-run lead.

The score remained 3-1 until the top of the eighth, when sophomore outfielder Allbry Major hit an inside-the-park home run that also scored graduate infielder Jake Shepski to put Xavier up 5-1.

They tacked on three more insurance runs in the top of the ninth, with a Shepski RBI double, Warkentin RBI single and Givin RBI triple all scoring runs for Xavier. A scoreless ninth by senior reliever Matt Kent secured the 8-1 win.

After Saturday night's game was rained out, the

Musketeers returned to action Sunday afternoon for a day-night doubleheader.

Unlike Friday night, Xavier couldn't get much going with the bats and took a 5-0 loss in game one of the doubleheader. Creighton starter Denson Hull threw a seven-inning complete game, striking out five while allow-

ing just three hits to silence the Xavier bats.

In the rubber match of the series on Sunday night, Xavier got a fantastic outing from junior Connor Grammes to pick up a 3-1 win. He secured the win on the hill for Xavier, tossing seven innings while striking out six.

Creighton scored its lone run in the bottom of the first off a Jake Holton RBI to grab a quick 1-0 lead, but Xavier responded in the top of the fifth when Warkentin singled home freshman infielder Kody Darcy. Shepski gave Xavier a 2-1 lead and later added an insurance run when he singled home Darcy in the eighth to give the Musketeers a two-run cushion. For his quality performances last weekend, Shepski was named to the Big East Weekly Honor Roll.

Freshman relief pitcher Lane Flamm got the six-out save for his fifth save of the year.

Xavier gained a 2-1 lead early against Miami on Tuesday afternoon at Hayden Field thanks to Major's two-run homer.

However, the Musketeers lost the lead in the fifth. Monastras also homered, but Xavier ultimately fell short by three runs.

Wood captures Big East individual championship



Photo courtesy of goxavier.com

Sophomore Garrett Wood won the Big East individual title, shooting a -3. As a team, the Musketeers finished in seventh place. Wood awaits his NCAA Regional placement, which is scheduled to be revealed on Wednesday.

BY DONNIE MENKE
Staff Writer

Sophomore Garrett Wood captured the men's golf individual Big East championship this past weekend, following in the footsteps of Mikayla Fitzpatrick, who won the women's individual championship the weekend before.

Wood and Fitzpatrick are the first duo to secure championships in five years, when St. John's won both.

Wood shot a 75 in the opening round, three over par, but rebounded with an even 72 in the second round to move into a tie for fifth place heading into the final day.

He shot better than par on the final to claim the championship. Wood is the 12th in-

dividual conference winner in Xavier history.

Sophomore Imaad Qureshi finished 21st overall, but led Xavier with 34 total birdies. The score allowed him to tie for third place at the Big East Tournament. Sophomore Martin Jaramillo also finished in the top 25, placing 24th, while freshman Nick Frey tied for 36th.

As a whole, the team shot 316 (+28) on the first day, which had them in eighth place going into the second day. They sat 18 strokes behind the leaders, Creighton, as the Blue Jays shot 298 (+10) on the first day.

Xavier rebounded to shoot the second best score on the second day, shooting just 293 (+5) to put them at 609 (+33)

heading into the final day. They trailed leaders Marquette (+15) by 18 strokes.

That was as close as Xavier would get, however. The Musketeers shot a 303 (+15) in the final round of the tournament to finish with a score of 912 (+48), which got them seventh place overall. Marquette captured the team title with an 872 (+8).

Wood will participate in one of the six NCAA Regionals as a result of his title, which take place from May 13-15. The possible sites at which Wood could participate are: Louisville, Ky., Pullman, Wash., Stanford, Calif., Athens, Ga., Myrtle Beach, S.C. and Austin, Texas. His placement will be revealed on Wednesday.

Roberts, Kostarellis set track & field school records

BY TIM KRAMER
Staff Writer

Xavier track and field closed out its regular season on a high note and looks ahead to the Big East Championships.

The men's and women's teams competed in four meets throughout the last two weekends: the Bryan Clay Invitational, Pacesetter Invitational, the Beach Invitational and the Lenny Lyles-Clark Wood Invitational.

During the three meets in California, the men's side set school records.

One standout performance came from sophomore William Roberts, who broke his original individual school record in the 400-meter hurdles, posting a time of 53.64 at the Bryan Clay Invite.

While on the women's side sophomore Anna Kostarellis continued her successful second-year campaign.

At the Beach Invite, Kostarellis set the school record in the 3000-meter steeplechase with a time of 10:31.30.

She also competed in heat 4 of the 5000-meter run posting a time of 16:49.24 placing her in third place overall at the Bryan Clay Invite.

Kostarellis now ranks 40th individually in the NCAA

East Region.

At the Pacesetter Invitational hosted by Indiana State, Xavier posted 16 top-10 finishers.

Freshman Maya Hannagan won the 5000-meter run at 17:35.36 and senior Kara Robinson won the 400-meter hurdles at 1:03.24.

Sophomore Connor Meehan led the men's side placing first in the 800-meter dash with a time of 1:55.95.

At the Lenny Lyles-Clark Wood Invitational, sophomore Jennifer Prial took home a first-place finish in the 3,000-meter steeplechase with a time of 10:43.84. The result marked Prial's personal-best time in the event.

"We had a good weekend at Louisville. It was exactly what I was looking for two weeks before Big East," head coach Ryan Orner told goxavier.com. "We competed well, we executed race plans well and hung in there against some good competition. Jennie Prial's win in the steeplechase was definitely the highlight of the meet but everyone on the team who competed had a good meet."

Xavier will return at the Big East Outdoor Track and Field Championships on May 10-11 in New York City.

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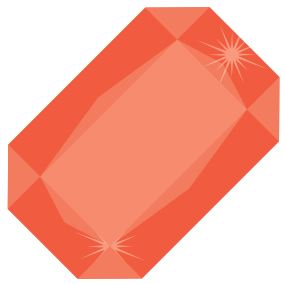
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